



## **Interstate 285 Top End Perimeter**

### ***Variable Speed Limits Implementation and Speed Limit Increase***

**Two significant changes addressing safety and congestion are coming to the Top End of Interstate 285, the area north of its interchanges with Interstate 20 in DeKalb and Fulton counties. In September, variable speed limits will be operational; and the speed limit will increase to 65 mph.**

#### **What is VSL?**

**Variable Speed Limits (VSL)** are limits that change based on road, traffic, and weather conditions. VSL electronic signs slow down traffic ahead of congestion or bad weather to smooth out flow, diminish stop-and-go conditions and reduce crashes. This low-cost, cutting edge technology alerts drivers in real time to speed changes due to conditions down the road. Overhead changeable message signs will warn motorists of upcoming congestion, giving them ample time to slow down. More consistent speeds improve safety by helping to prevent rear-end and lane-changing collisions due to sudden stops.

**The speed limit will increase from 55 mph to 65 mph.** This new limit will be more consistent with a similar increase implemented on Southside I-285 last fall. Additionally, the new limit is more consistent with driver expectations and behavior on I-285.

#### **Why is Georgia DOT Introducing VSL to the Top End?**

**Research has demonstrated that VSL offer the following benefits:**

- Enhance driver safety.
- Moderate and stabilize traffic flow.
- Provide early warnings to motorists of slow traffic or hazardous roadway conditions.
- Reduce congestion and traffic delays by harmonizing traffic flow and reducing traffic crashes.
- Reduce crash frequency, severity and the likelihood of secondary crashes by reducing the speed of vehicles as they approach an incident, traffic queue, or stoppage.
- Reduce vehicle emissions.

#### **What is Schedule for Installing and Implementing VSL?**

- Through **July**: installation of overhead Changeable Message Signs (CMS) and electronic VSL signs on shoulders with occasional single lane closures. Signs are covered and inoperable.
- **August**: testing.
- **September**: VSL operations and new maximum speed limit begin.

***VSL: Slow Down to Get There Faster***

### Other Information You May Need to Know.

- VSL is coming to the **I- 285 north end only**, not to the south end of I-285. The north end carries an average of 50,000 more vehicles daily (100,000 more in some corridors) and has almost twice as many interchanges. There is more traffic, more merging, more weaving, more congestion and a greater risk of crashes.
- Georgia DOT's Transportation Management Center (TMC) operators will **monitor the roadway 24/7** for crashes, breakdowns, heavy congestion and severe weather. When needed, they will electronic make **real time adjustments** to reduce the speed limit in and leading up to the affected area using active traffic management software.
- Our ability to remotely change the speed limit on the corridor is not intended to create speed traps. Rather, the changing speed limits are designed to create safer travel by preventing accidents and stop-and-go conditions.
- Once motorists clear congested areas, speed limits are increased to normal speeds.
- There will be 176 electronic speed limit signs in 88 locations approximately ½-mile to 1 ½-miles apart on I-285 Top End.
- Speed limits will be adjusted in 10-mph increments from 65 mph to a minimum of 35 mph.
- Georgia DOT anticipates that the speed limit will remain 65 mph most of the time.
- VSL is successfully used in other states.

**For more information and to view a video on VSL, please visit <http://www.dot.ga.gov/VSL>**

***VSL: Slow Down to Get There Faster***